



Me 2023 | Lolomiga 0010

# TAPUITEA

The Official Newsletter of the American Samoa Government

IA MANINO LE FOLAUGA

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## Fa'afetai ma Faamālō i Faiaoga Uma o Le Teritori

O le malosi'aga o so'o se galuega i lo tatou Teritori, e tupu a'e mai le iloa ma tomai e totōina e faia'oga ia tatou fanau. O le to'atele o tatou sa feagai ma se faia'oga na talitonuina tatou e ui ina leai se isi sa ia faatāuaina tatou. O le galuega a le faia'oga e maoa'e lona sao i le soifua manuia o a tatou fanau ma le taulau o le atiina'e o lo tatou Teritori.

Ua faasolo atu ma auaua'i mai augātupulaga, o loo tumau lo tatou faatuatuaga i faia'oga mo tiute lē faigofie. E ui ina eseese tau ma le sui le soifuaga, ae tumau le tali a faia'oga i le valaau e auaina ma le lē faalogologo tiga i se tasi o galuega aupito tāua. E le mafuafuaina lo latou sao i le alu i luma o nai a tatou fanau, ma e o'o i talaatu o le potua'oga le aogā o lo latou sao. Ua latou fauina tupulaga e avea ma ta'ita'i faatasi ma le suia ai o le tele o soifua.



Matou te faafetai atu i faia'oga uma o Amerika Samoa i le tuutōina o lo latou soifua ma le naunauta'i i le a'oa'oina o alo o lo tatou atunuu. Ua matou molimauina le tāua o lo outou sao i le manuia o fanau a'oga, ma le faa'oaina o o tatou tagata lautele e ala i alo ua a'oa'oina mo le lumana'i. Faafetai galulue ma le alolofa ia avea fanau ma faafiafia loto aemaise ia i matou ua avea ma ta'ita'i.

# Fa'afetai!

[Photo Credit: The Warrior]

# Faamālō i Tausi Gasegase

E lē faaitiitia le galulue punoua'i o o tatou tausī gasegase e faamautinoa ua maloloina le soifua o o tatou tagata. E oo i lava i ogaoga aupito tugā ma le lē mautinoa, o lo o muā'au lava i le tali atu i puapuaga, e oo lava i tulaga e lamatia ai o lo latou soifua maloloina i le tausiga o tagata gasegase.

I lenei vaiaso, tatou faaaloalo faapitoa i tausī gasegase i le loto tetele e faatino galuega fitā e feagai ai. E le fesiligia le tatau i tagata uma ona faaeaea i lenei auaunaga o loo tuutoina atu ai le soifua. Ou te taalo atu i le mamalu o lo tatou atunuu e faailoa le agaga faafetai ma le talisapaia o lenei galuega tulaga ese.

Se'i o tatou tatalo foi mo lo latou saogalemu, soifua maloloina, ma le soifua manuia.

E fa'afetai ma faailoa atu lo matou faagaetia ma faailogaina faatasi ai ma le atunuu la outou tausiga lē faalogologo tigi! Ua outou faaali le tuuina atoa o le soifua mo nisi. Faafetai i galuega e aso ta'itasi. O la matou faafetai lena mai le ta'ele o o matou loto.

Ia Manuia le Vaiaso o Tausi Gasegase!



# Manuia le Aso Sa o Tina



Ua lalago fa'atasi le alofa o le Atua ma lana ta'ita'i ina mana mo lo outou mamalu Tinā, o le afu'afu e lelepa ma fa'alalanu ai le anofale o Aiga, Nu'u, Ekalesia atoa ai ma le Atunu'u. O lo outou alofa fa'atinā, ua fa'atusa'ina i le u'u manogi e sama ai sē mago, ona fa'atoā atoa lea o le lagi malofie. O galuega lelei e tau māsua'sua ma tafe atu ona fa'amanui'aga mo alo ma fanau, o la outou taulaga lena e fa'amemelo i ai le ola o le Aiga



Viia le Atua mamana ona ua aulia mai e le mamalu o Tinā lenei Aso, e fa'apito au'gafa mo outou, e uma sulā 'ae le uma ona salani lo outou afu liligi. O tua atu o ni mealelei ma le matagofie, o lo'o 'ala'ala fa'atupu mai ai le Tinā. E tautala aso le leo malū na te au'maia le filemu i totonu o Aiga ma mafutaga, o le fuga e fa'asau na te momoli'ina le onosai ma le fa'apalepale, ina ia 'toa ai Aiga ma nofo lelei. Ua faitau'ina i ma'aola la outou gagana o le fa'amalie loto, e punitia ai le o'ona o fa'afitauli ma faigata o le ola nei.



Sau ia oe le Tinā; e taugata lou fa'asinomaga, ae loloto ou 'ala e fai ma fa'asino'ala o lē saili malo ma finau ma tofo'tofoga. Ua Tinumāsala'sala Amerika Samoa, ina ua iloga so outou sao mo lana Faigamalo, ua malie sua o le vai, ua malie fo'i le va'ai. Talofa i na'i Tinā, o lo'o apulusia i gasegsae, 'ae maise fo'i Tinā ua folau sola i le lagi fa'amatagi agi. E afua mai lana Afioga le Kovana Lutena ma le Faletua, fa'apea fo'i ma'ua ma le Tinā o le Atunu'u, 'ae maise o nai o mā Aiga uma, atoa ai ma le Faigamalo. E momoli atu ai fa'amanui'aga mo Tinā uma o Amerika Samoa, fa'apea fo'i ma Aiga o lo'o ala'ala i fafo, Ia manuia tele lo outou Aso fa'apitoa, ma ia fa'atā'uaina pea outou i finagalo o Tamā ma fanau. Ia manuia le Aso Sa o Tinā.



# American Samoa Joins Key US Foreign Direct Investment Summit

The United States' top foreign direct investment event – the 2023 SelectUSA Investment Summit - launched today bringing together White House officials, cabinet members, governors, and global business leaders to promote investment and entrepreneurship opportunities in the U.S. Hosted by U.S. Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo this year's summit will bring together an impressive list of speakers and over 4,000 participants. The Honorable Governor Lemanu Mauga, along with key cabinet members and staff, are in attendance promoting foreign direct investment opportunities in American Samoa to improve economic diversification and business growth in the territory.

This year's participation will mark American Samoa's third appearance at the SelectUSA summit. In year's prior, Governor Lemanu and his delegation were able to engage in discussions with key federal partners, global business leaders, regional stakeholders, and other resources to help achieve economic goals under Governor Lemanu's agenda.

"The United States continues to lead as the world's top FDI destination, and we believe that the U.S. territories, American Samoa in particular, can be valuable partners for investors looking enter or expand into the U.S. market. We are our region's gateway to the U.S. market, and so we are bringing this



message to the world and are looking forward to a great summit." Said Governor Lemanu.

This year, over 53 States & Territories participated, more than 82+ markets were represented, and nearly 2,000 investors were in attendance. Honorable Governor Lemanu, alongside governors of other U.S. territories, will participate in a roundtable discussion on Wednesday to highlight the benefits of investing in American Samoa. The American Samoa Delegation embarked on a series of rigorous back to back investment sessions from the onset of the summit. The delegation is comprised of leadership from ASG departments and private business partners. American Samoa was recognized for a remarkable level of participation compared to other States and territories. As highlighted in Honorable Gina M. Raimondo's address, "unwavering commitment to invest in the people and programs that drive our economy is essential to the prosperity of our country". That is the overarching goal the A.S. delegation steadfastly supports. Tuesday night will be the Collateral Event: Invest American Samoa Reception featuring Guest speakers Honorable Governor Lemanu P. S. Mauga and Executive Director of SelectUSA, Mr. Jasjit Singh. The Young Ambassador of American Samoa will be performing in front of more than 100 invited SelectUSA Summit guests (investors, participants, etc.)

# Invest in American Samoa Reception



On May 2, 2023, American Samoa unfolded a captivating program that left the attending investors thoroughly impressed and eager for further engagement. The festive evening commenced with welcoming and opening remarks by the Deputy Secretary, Tauese V. Sunia, who also served as the master of ceremonies for the event. Followed, an opening prayer by Governor's Chaplain Mageo Patolo Mageo. The two guest speakers were Honorable Governor Lemanu P. S. Mauga and Jasjit Singh, Executive Director of SelectUSA Summit.

Honorable Governor Lemanu presented American Samoa as a viable investment destination aided by its strategic location in the South Pacific and its status as a US territory. Moreover, the island's proximity to Samoa and other neighboring islands is an added advantage for potential investors exploring the Pacific Rim market.

The highlight of the night was the performance by the Young Ambassador of American Samoa, proved to be the key attraction for investors who were left mesmerized and eager to explore investment opportunities in American Samoa. The reception was successful in utilizing the opportunity to market the territory's potential and attract investment for economic development, economic diversification and job creation.

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The Government of American Samoa has implemented a range of initiatives to facilitate investment in various sectors, such as technology, Tourism, Healthcare, Renewable Energy, and so much more.

Moreover, it recognized the potential of these sectors and is taking proactive measures to attract investment and create economic opportunities. Additionally, with the advancement of technology, American Samoa has been able to expand its distance learning programs, offering a unique opportunity for investors interested in investing in the education sector. Furthermore, American Samoa's unique cultural heritage presents a significant opportunity for investors to tap into the territory's tourism potential. Investors looking to invest in American Samoa are encouraged by the government's commitment to ensuring a business-friendly environment characterized by transparency and ease of doing business.



# Invest in American Samoa



The 2nd day of the summit commenced with a Plenary session, during which the attendees had the honor to listen to a welcoming address from the Honorable Gina M. Raimondo, Secretary of the U.S. Department of Commerce. The address set the tone for the rest of the summit, emphasizing the importance of international cooperation in promoting innovation and growth in industries related to commerce and technology. Raimondo highlighted the Inflation Reduction Act, marking a significant milestone in the battle against climate change and clean energy solutions. This act is expected to unlock a colossal amount of private capital investment into climate-innovative technologies, spurring new green projects that promise to transform the energy landscape. This act brings new hope to American Samoa as we are actively looking for ways to reduce carbon footprint and fight against climate change.

The Honorable Secretary has also made a noteworthy announcement, one

of which pertains to the Tech Hub initiative set to launch this summer. This is a significant step towards investing in our national security and competitiveness. The new initiative aims to address the issue of limited growth opportunities beyond coastal cities by designating communities as Tech Hubs and making direct investments in regional tech economies. This initiative aligns with American Samoa's goal of a Innovative and Technology Park - American Samoa as Pacific Regional hub for technology.

The A.S. delegations are fortunate to gain insights on workforce development for economic prosperity and job creation, network with potential investors, and exchange information on best practices for technology business incubators.

In due course, a comprehensive summary of daily movements and after-action report will be accessible for public knowledge. Below are short summaries of prospects gleaned from

sessions attended by the leadership and staff.

Daily Movement | AAR synopsis from the leadership & staff who attended the summit on Day 1- May 1, 2023 Monday:

- Building a Tech Ecosystem in Your Locality

Building a tech ecosystem requires among many things, support and resources for startups so they can focus more on producing products or services.

- Workforce Development: Preparing for Jobs for the Future

- CleanTech Incentive Landscape Inline with the Biden Administration's goals - BIL and IRA (Inflation Reduction Act) each have billions of dollars in public investments committed to Clean Energy Initiatives

- Invest in Tribal Communities

American Samoa has a unique hybrid system of law; indigenous matai system and communal land ownership. No Recommendation as American Samoa has preserved its pre colonial culture better in contrast to other US territories in terms of tribal sovereignty and Trust Lands vs. Fee Lands.



Trade & Export recommendations:  
Enhance, improve the agricultural and

- Structuring your business in the U.S.

Recommendations:

- (1) Engage legal and tax professionals for advice on choosing the best suited business structures.
- (2) Streamline standard process to attract investors.
- (3) Choosing the appropriate legal structure is critical to both investors and government
- (4) Implement a comprehensive regulatory process to avoid any tax evasion by foreign investors
- (5)

Conduct tax audits for medium to large corporate businesses to ensure that all applicable taxes are remitted to ASG.

The Invest in American Samoa booth is ready and open for potential investors around the world.



# Investing in the U.S. Territories

The Samoan Heritage Initiative Program (SHIP) festivities officially launched today with the start of the Cricket Tournament held at Ke'ehi Lagoon Park. The Cricket Tournament, aimed at promoting Health and Wellness, brought together community members to celebrate the long standing initiative to perpetuate the Samoan Culture and cheer on their favorite teams. It also provides a chance for players to showcase their skills and experience the game, and for spectators to witness the excitement of this dynamic game.

In attendance were Reverend Malaeotofiga Levaula, Hawai'i Methodist SEA Reverend Elder Koneferenisi Nu'usa, American Samoa Government (ASG) representative Tavita Amani Savea, American Samoa Government-Hawai'i (ASG-HI) staff and local members of the community. Guests and players were welcomed by SHIP Sports Chairman Kesimale Fano, following the

welcoming remarks, Pastor Malaeotofiga Levaula led an invocation and shared a scripture from Lamentations 3:22. The moving scripture spoke to the importance of knowing that the steadfast love of the Lord is unchanging and everlasting; available to all who seek it. He reminded us that God's love is eternal. "Your identity lies within your Heritage," said Levaula. "Ua ta'oto le fa'asinomaga ma lau Aganu'u." Our lands are a Heritage from God to our ancestors. We are a heritage to the Lord and he is mindful of each and every one of us. "Regardless of how far we've traveled from Samoa, may we always remember our identity; who we are as a people and value our Health (Soifua Maloloina), the future (Lumana'i), our Language (Gagana), and our Culture (Aganu'u)." Reverend Levaula expressed his appreciation and gratitude to all who played a vital role in making the tournament a success. He ended his speech with a reminder for everyone to

remain humble and refrain from being quick to anger. American Samoa Government representative Tavita Savea and Reverend Elder Koneferenisi Nu'usa also shared a few words of encouragement to all the Teams. The inaugural ball was hit by the Hawai'i Methodist SEA Koneferenisi Nu'usa signifying the start of the Tournament.

The Tournament brought together 8 teams to compete for the trophy. This initiative is being supported by a range of sponsors, including prominent businesses and entrepreneurs. Contributions will help the Samoan Heritage Initiative Program organize and fund several health and wellness programs and workshops for the Samoan Community. According to the SHIP Sports Chairman Kesimale Fano, "We are thrilled to be organizing this tournament, as it embodies our commitment to the well-being of our people. We believe that through community engagement in sports, we can help address some of the long standing health concerns in our community."



(Left to Right): Deputy Under Secretary for International Trade Diane Farrell, the Honorable Governor of CNMI Arnold Palacios, the Honorable Lt. Governor of the US Virgin Islands Tregenza Roach, Esq., the Honorable Governor of Puerto Rico Pedro Pierluisi, the Honorable Governor of American Samoa Lemanu P.S. Mauga, and the Honorable Governor of Guam Lou Leon Guerrero. Madam Deputy Under Secretary Farrell moderated the panel on "Investing in the US Territories" at the 2023 SelectUSA Investment Summit.

# Secretary Raimondo's Governor Roundtable Meeting



*The Honorable Governor Lemanu Mauga joined a roundtable meeting with the U.S. Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo (steading) and Governors from other states and territories.*

The Governors' Roundtable Meeting with US Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo was held on May 3rd, 2023, and was well attended by more than twenty Governors from States and U.S.Territories.

The conference meeting was an opportunity for the Governor of American Samoa to share about relevant issues facing the territory today, and learn from other State Governors on how they are tackling similar challenges. During the roundtable meeting, the Honorable Lemanu highlighted the unique challenges that American Samoa faces as a remote U.S. territory in the Pacific Ocean. One of the critical issues facing American Samoa is its remote location, which presents multiple challenges to the territory's economic advancement and infrastructure development. At the conference, Honorable Lemanu emphasized the need to make American Samoa the US Pacific hub for technology, healthcare, education, and economic trade.

Governor Lemanu commended his fellow Territorial Governors for their efforts to boost economic growth and innovation. During the meeting, it was noted that permitting and immigration were among the key issues discussed. Additionally, the Honorable Governor mentioned that American Samoa has its own immigration system.

This process is distinct from the US Federal immigration policies, and a permit is required to enter American Samoa for work or residency purposes. It was clarified in the meeting that American Samoa maintains exclusive control over its immigration and residency policies. The American Samoa government has initiated various infrastructural investments with the ultimate goal for American Samoa to be a US Pacific regional hub in healthcare, education, information technology and overall economic trade.

# State Department: Pacific Island Forum

On May 3, 2023 Honorable Governor Lemanu P. S. Mauga met with Wendy R. Sherman, Deputy Secretary of State to discuss important matters regarding American Samoa's observer status on the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF), and how American Samoa can be more proactive at a regional level.

The Pacific Islands Forum is the region's premiere political and economic organization, bringing together 18 countries to address common issues affecting the Pacific region. Given the Pacific Islands Forum's impact on shaping policies that affect the Pacific region, it is crucial to push for American Samoa's inclusion in this organization. As one of the US territories in the Pacific, American Samoa has often been hindered by bureaucratic issues and limited regional cooperation with its neighboring island states.

Over the years, American Samoa's isolation from regional decision-making has contributed to a lack of adequate representation and support on relevant issues including climate change, public health, and economic development. Having a seat at the Pacific Islands Forum would allow American Samoa to participate in important policy discussions and decision-making processes that directly impact the territory's future in the Pacific. If granted the opportunity to become a PIF Associate member, American Samoa can make a valuable contribution to the region as a whole. Through active participation, American Samoa will be able to share its unique perspectives and experiences on various issues.



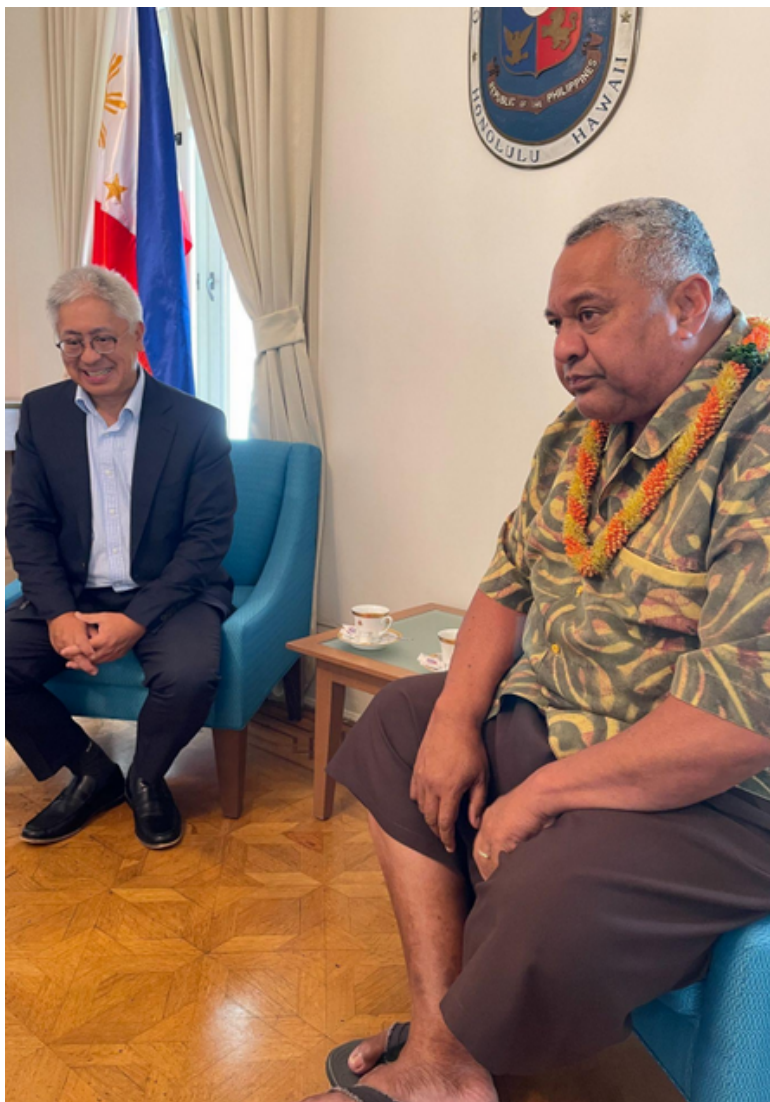
# Honorable Governor's Meeting with Consul General of Philippines: A.S. Compliance as a host country for PH Migrant workers



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# No Minimum Purchase Requirements are Allowed for Debit Cards. \$10.00 Minimum OK for Credit Cards



Recently some constituents of the Honorable Representative Larry Sanitola expressed concerns with minimum spending requirements when utilizing their credit and debit cards and Representative Sanitola alerted the Attorney General.

The Attorney General stated “I ensured the Director of Consumer Protection Lynne Blankenbeker and the team of investigators made this a priority and visited stores that were reported to have minimum purchase requirements for credit and debit cards, to do a prompt investigation. Our Office utilized this opportunity to inform businesses of the credit and debit card minimum purchase rules.”

In 2010, Congress passed the Durbin Amendment which directs the Federal Reserve Board to regulate debit card interchange fees so that they are reasonable and proportional to the cost incurred by the issuer with respect to the transaction. See, 15 U.S.C. § 1693o-2. 12 C.F.R § 235.1 Likewise, this gave the Federal Reserve the power to regulate minimum amounts for credit card purchases and as such, the Federal Reserve set the current limit at \$10 or less. See, 15 U.S.C. 1693o-2 (3) (A) (i) (II). These minimums requirements do NOT however, apply to debit cards, only credit cards. The merchant application agreement utilized in the territory accurately reflects the Federal rules and laws.

All businesses must take notice that if you were previously applying a minimum purchase requirement for debit cards you must stop this practice immediately. Also, please be reminded that you cannot exceed a \$10.00 minimum for credit card purchases. Thus, a \$20 minimum purchase for a credit card is unlawful.

Currently, the Territorial Bank of American Samoa (TBAS) has debit cards but no credit cards. There is NO minimum purchase requirement for using a TBAS debit card. Thus, for example, a debit card can be used to make a \$5 purchase.

Any questions or consumer complaints should be directed to the Director of Consumer Protection at [consumer@la.as.gov](mailto:consumer@la.as.gov) or phone no. 684-633-4163.



**SUBMIT YOUR  
DEPARTMENT'S  
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EMAIL US AT:  
[comms@go.as.gov](mailto:comms@go.as.gov)

PHONE: 633-4116

## **MAY PROCLAMATIONS**

National Nurses Week  
Police Appreciation Week  
American Samoa Water Month  
Second Amendment to the Declaration of  
Public Health Emergency

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

May 14 Mother's Day  
May 14-19 Public Safety Week  
May 15 Swains Island Flag Day  
May 19 American Samoa Community College  
Graduation  
May 21- 26 Department of Public Works Week